

Date: November 26, 2008

Alert Number: 0028

To: Providers, Partners, Trading Partners, Managed Care Organizations

Re: Patient Account Numbers/Patient Control Numbers on Claims

The Patient Control Number (PCN), also referred to as Patient Account Number, must be correctly aligned on claim submissions in order for it to appear accurately on the Remittance Advice (RA). The RA reports the first 12 characters of the PCN submitted on the original claim. If the PCN is not correctly aligned on the claim, it may truncate at any point in the sequence and not appear accurately on the RA. The PCN on claims assists in identifying the claims reported on the RA.

To ensure correct alignment on electronic claims, providers should “align left” the numbers in the applicable element, form locator, or loop, as applicable to their claim submission, so that all digits will be shown on the claim. This can be accomplished in some applications by highlighting the number and pressing the “Control” key with the “L” key.

Paper claims submitted to ForwardHealth on the 1500 Health Insurance Claim Forms and UB-04 (CMS 1450) Claim Forms are processed using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software that recognizes printed, alphanumeric text. Providers should adhere to the following guidelines when indicating Patient Account Numbers:

- On the 1500 Health Insurance Claim form in Element 26 — Providers may enter up to 14 characters for the Patient Account Number. The sequence of numbers must be “aligned left.”
- On the UB-04 Claim form in Form Locator 3a — Providers may enter up to 20 characters for the Patient Account Number. The sequence of numbers must be “aligned left.”
- On all 837 Health Care Claim transactions in Loop 2300, Element CLM01 — Providers may enter up to 38 characters. To avoid inaccurate reporting on the RA, PCNs should not begin with a zero. On 837 transactions, the sequence of numbers automatically aligns and fills in left to right.
- On Provider Electronic Solutions (PES) software transactions providers may enter up to 38 characters. To avoid inaccurate reporting on the RA, PCNs should not begin with a zero. On PES transactions, the sequence of numbers automatically aligns and fills in left to right.

Although ForwardHealth continues to accept handwritten claims, providers should avoid submitting handwritten claims whenever possible.

Please call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 with questions.

Informational